AN Halfe-penny-worth of Wit, in a Penny-worth of Paper.

OR,

The Hermites Tale.

The third Impreſsion.

LONDON
Printed for *Thomas Thorp*, by the Aſſignement of *Edw: Blount*. 1613.

Halle-penny-

worth of Wit, in

a Penny-worth of

Pipe.

OR,

The Humorous

The ridiculous

BRITISH MUSEUM

LONDON

Printed for Thomas Thorp, by
the Assignment of Edm:
Blount. 1613.

To the Right Honourable the Counteſſe of Suſſex.

IN times of former ages (honourable faire Ladie) I haue often heard, that Vſury, Lying, and Flattery, were worſe excommunicate out of Court and Common-wealth, then thred-bare cloakes or greaſie bootes out of the Preſence. O they were vertuous men in thoſe dales, & would giue the deuill his due, if it were but in wearing deuils breeches. Surely I am growne into ſuch infinite amours of their honeſt packe-ſtaffe plaineneſſe, that ſincerely and verily, I do meane, as it were, to imitate it. Firſt, for Vſury, I hate it worſe then any empty purſe, and you ſhal haue none of mee, I beſeech God to inſpire mee but with halfe ſo many good wordes, as may counteruaile the hundreth part of the principal of your gracious fauors towards me. Next for lying, in no line of this Booke ſhall you find me lyable, (if I be not condēned for too much ſpeaking the troth, I care not) and to make you know, that I am old *Tom-tel-troth* indeed, I will giue you a taſt whereby you may iudge of the reſt. *Item*. I ſay I am no Scholler, if that be a lie I referre me to the iudgement of the learned, who if they but poſe me in the petigree of a *Noune* and *Pronoune*, I ſtraight croſſe and bleſſe my ſelfe, & thinke they begin to coniure. Againe, I affirme that thus being no Scholler, but a ſimple honeſt Dunce, as I am, that cānot ſay *B* to a *Battle-*

dore, it is very preſumptuouſly done of me, to offer to hey-paſſe and repaſſe it in Print ſo, when my Anceſtors ſcarſe euer heard of a Pen & Inke-horne, & much more preſumptuouſly, it being ſuch a courſe home-ſpun linſey woolſey webbe of wit as it is, to ſhroude it vnder the protection of ſo high a perſonage, who are more worthy to patronize the deuine Muſe of *Apollo*, or the thundring ſpirit of *Homer*, then this Countrey dance of the worlds end, or harſh Lancaſhire Horne-pipe. Taxe me who dare, or who can, that herein my tongue doubles one ſillable. Marry ſome excuſe wold do well, for this my Eagle-ſoaring, and too too foreward attempting, and yet I need not neither, for out of your owne ſuper-abounding good nature you would ſupply it though I let it alone; & yet I will not let it alone, but throw ſome light vaile, of ſpotleſſe pretended wel-meaning, ouer it, to huke & mask it from publicke ſhame & obloquy: Faith, no more but this, I ſee my inferiours in the gifts of learning, wiſedome, & vnderſtanding, torment the *Print* daily with lighter trifles and *Iiggalorums*, then my ruſſet *Hermit* is, which hath made me the bolder to ſhoulder in amongſt thē. They clap a paire of French ſpurres on the heeles of Vice to rowell ope the wombe of that reſty Iade Iniquity, & let all the loath-ſome guts & garbidge of his panch iſſue out to putrifie and infect the freſh aire of *Pauls Church-yard*; I curbe ſin with a double ſnaffle of reprehenſiō, & turne & wind him with my ſmart wand of correctiō to what vertuous manage I pleaſe. There-

fore

fore for my good meaning, not Art, am I to bee ſeene & allowed. For my inſolence in preſenting this homely bundle of Hermits wands to ſo ſacred a Madam, vnder this couert barron it ſhall march, that weak houſes require the ſtrongeſt props, and the poore muſt pay their fines to their Lord or Lady whatſoeuer, be it but in pepper-corns, or ſingle halfe-pence. My Booke I entitle, *A halfe-peny worth of wit in a peny-worth of paper*, whereby it drawes ſomewhat nere to the matter & the purpoſe. If you accept it well, there is no man that will accept it ill, and except you ſtray from the worlds ordinary cuſtome (that take Vintners leaden halfe-peny tokens for ſound payment) you cannot accept of it amiſſe. Imagine this one of thē, for either it will paſſe for a half-peny or nothing. But ſoft I haue let paſſe my laſt relique of antiquity, which is there horrible and terrible deteſtatiō of flattery, & my religious cōformation therunto. I haue proued my ſelfe guiltles of lying & vſury, & if my Book will not ſaue me frō being haltred for flatery, I wold it were treaſon to write & read, or *Gal, Gum, & Copperis* wherof Inke is made, were held more odious thē poiſō: all the flattery that I wil vſe (if it be flattery to ſpeak truth) ſhal be to pronounce that you are truly vertuous, faire, wiſe, & honorable: & ſo I leaue you, deſiring pardon for my boldnes, and praying for your encreaſe of felicity to your dying day.

Your Honours moſt zealous
deuoted humble Seruant.

Humphrey King.

To all his Honourable Friends, or Honest dis-perſed Wel-wiſhers whereſo-euer.

IT would well become a deuote Hermite *to begin with* Grace *and* Peace *vnto you, but that I hold friuolous, ſince if you want* Grace, *go by* Ieronimo, *you are no friends for me: and if you be not men of* Peace, *it is not my* Hermites *Staffe, and my little bucker-clapdiſh, that will appeaſe you, wherefore* Shokkatorum, *that which will bee ſhall bee. If you will bee quiet and leaue your mocking tongue you may, if not, ſtoute on by leaue, the more ſport it breeds you, the gladder I am (as the* Scotch-man *ſaies) that I haue it for you. Cunning Lawyers, vpon the falſe miſtaking of a* T. *or an* N. *or putting in a daſh ouer-plus (if the Debtor bee rich and able roundly to fee them) will make a writ of Error of any thing: doe not ſo by mee I beſeech you, for I am a very bad writer of* Orthography, *and can ſcarce ſpell my* Abcie *if it were laid before mee. The* Printer *may helpe mee to deliuer to you true* Engliſh, *but as I am a true man to God and the King, hee findes it not in my Coppy. I meane well, that I am ſure, and if I had better meanes to expreſſe, I would make you better vnderſtand it: in the meane time, what is but meane, take it in as good part, as if it were the higheſt treble that the cleereſt Poetical warbling throate could ſhrill or quauer forth. Dangerous miſinterpreting I feare not,*

Since

Since *Enuy*, that blacke venom'd Toad-swolne Elfe,
Nere slanders a cleere conscience to it selfe.

Onely, if you could a little dispence here and there with a hard Rime or two, (in which yet you shall not say but there is some reason) and my verses that are like Cheaters false Dice of high-men and low-men, one while eights, now tennes, another while foure-teenes, and sometimes sixes, I will number you, (though I keepe no numbers) in the fore-most ranke of my benefactors and fauourers. Me thinks a King by birth as I am, should not debase himselfe to intreate so much. And yet I remember an old schoole-boyes game of King by your leaue *(euer since I was a boy my selfe) and so I am afraid you will cry,* King by your leaue, we are to haue about with you, beare it off with the head and shoulders how you can. *But if you do, vpon all the Cannes and quart-pots about* London *I will be sworne, (all Wine-pots from this generall rule excepted, for them I haue for-sworne till* Michelmas, *vnlesse the new wine of* Peru, *that is made of no* Grape, *but a strange fruite in the* VVest-indies, *and is more comfortable to the braine and the stomacke, then any restoratiue or cordiall whatsoeuer) vpon them I say I will abiure and renounce, all claime or interest I haue had in that wicked word of* Poetry, *and bind my selfe and my heires, neuer more to be publicans and sinners, (or sinners in publique) in that vnfortunate Art of* Printing. *It hath bene told mee, that those that are slaine with the* Indians

poysoned

poyſoned arrowes, die with their mouthes ſhut, and how the Butchers in Germany, *kill their ſheep after the ſelfe-ſame order, by tying a cord about their mouthes, and ſo ſtrangling them, that their fleſh may be more ſwolne and puft vp: ſo would I die, by my good will, if this my labour miſ-carry, and haue my mouth cloſed vp from euer ſpeaking or writing hence-forward. Had I had learning enough, I would haue framed an inuectiue againſt learning, becauſe, I know, none ſaue the learned will finde fault with me: but ſeeing I haue it not, I muſt heere end my Epiſtle, and deſire ſuch as deſcend to deepely into my ſhallowneſſe, no otherwiſe to eſteeme of my writings then of Drummes and Trumpets in warre: which are not vſed ſo much to ſtir vp men to fury, as to teach them to march in meaſure.*

Yours, as you conceite me,

HVMPHRIY KING.

How

HOW dares the Author passe vnto the Presse,
Where Satyres, Essayes, Epigrams do swarme,
The Comicke, and the stately Tragicke verse,
And Caltha metamorphos'd with a charme?
A strong imagination wrought this thing,
His name being King, he thinkes himselfe a King.

In discommendation of the Author.

IT is no Tale, the Hermite is beli'd,
The Author ouer-aw'd, or much beguild.
Time past spoke plaine, and did no vices hide,
Time present must be pleased like achild.
Christen thy booke anew, then do'st thou well,
And call it Truth, a Tale's an Infidell.

KIng neuer prou'd more King in any thing,
Then in this plaine-song, freedome of a King:
Plaine vnaffected stile, yet vices sting;
Why (King) I see yfaith thoul't needs be King.

Conueniunt rebus nomina sæpe suis.

TO grace the man whom all the Graces fauour,
Lies not within the compaſſe of my quill,
Suffice it his moſt plauſible behauiour,
Drawes all the happy choiſe of wits, and skill,
To loue, admire, affect, and dignifie,
Himſelfe, and theſe his labours pleaſing lines.
Mongſt whom my zeale preſumes to ſignifie
Some loue to him, in whom ſuch vertue ſhines.
An *Hermits Tale*, an *Hermits Heart* declareth;
Sincere the one, ſo ſpotleſſe pure the other,
That with the vertues euermore it ſhareth,
By no meanes ſuffering ill the good to ſmother.
Go then ſweet *Hermits Tale*, and tell the wiſeſt,
Perfection liues not ſtill in the preciſeſt.

Vincor, non vinco.

THat I haue lou'd, and moſt reſpected thee,
True-honeſt *Humphrey*: I do heere proteſt,
And that the world ſhall witneſſe it with me,
Embrace this ſigne of loue amongſt the reſt;
Wilt thou haue more? my word I will engage:
Nay further yet: Il'e take a ſolemne oath,
By the Red-herring thy true Patronage,
And famous *Naſh*, ſo deere vnto vs both:
By all the Bowers that we haue reueld in,
Our merry times, that gallop hence ſo faſt,
By all the houres we haue together bin,
By all our vowes of friendſhip that haue paſt:
By theſe I ſweare my loue, and thy worke graced,
On her rich worth, and honour'd Title placed.

LAtely the Muſes from their forked hill
Deſcending downe into our humbler vale,
To taſte the fruits of Induſtrie and Skill
In makers of this time: Beheld thy Tale.
Which, though it did appeare emptie of Art,
(As that thy modeſtie hath ſtill profeſt)
Yet this faire cenſure they did all impart:
Thy loue to Arts therein was well expreſt.
But when they ſaw to whom it was deſign'd,
(A Ladie of her graces; ſo inſpir'd
With euery hountie both of forme and mind,
As of the Muſes ſelues, ſhe is admir'd)
They vow'd, thy worke ſhould liue; and with one voyce,
Approu'd thy Iudgement in ſo ſweet a choyce.

AN Halfe-peny-worth of Wit, in a Peny-worth of Paper.

ALIAS.

¶ *The Hermites Tale.*

WAlking by a Forreſt ſide,
An ancient Hermite I eſpide,
White was his head, old was his face,
Pale were his lookes, obſcure his place,
And in his hand I might behold
A booke all torne and very old;
I willing both to ſee and know
His place, and why he liued ſo,
Went to ſalute him, as vnknowne,
To be a partner of his moane,
He being of an humble ſpirit,
As one that heauen would inherite,

The Hermits Tale.

A friendly welcome to me gaue,
And brought me to his homely Caue,
VVhere he had liu'd full twenty yeares,
And for his ſinnes ſhed many teares;
Thinking euery howre to die,
Knowing the worlds vnconſtancie.
Then ſate he downe, and to me told:
I once was yong, but now am old,
And welcome is mine age to mee,
That no more changes I may ſee;
For I haue ſeene from time to time,
The higheſt fall, the loweſt clime:
Contray to that we expect,
To make vs know the worlds defect,
How time and death doth ſtill preſage
The fickleneſſe of euery age.
Like to the Moone that hath no power,
Louing to change, both day and howre.
Vnhappy men that liue therein,
VVhere nought is found but death and ſin.

The Hermits Tale.

Then gentle youth, if you would know
Heauens delight, the world forgoe,
For wordlings, very seldome can
Two Maisters serue, both God and man.
For if a man your Maister bee,
You then must sinne as well as hee,
To smooth his taste, and please his vaine,
How much so ere the sinne containe.
If he a Tyrant do professe,
Then must his seruant be no lesse;
Or if an Athiest hee bee knowne,
So must you be, or else be gone:
For I haue heard a prouerbe old,
Be rul'd by him that hath the gold.
Such are the errours of our age,
When soules for gold are laid to gage:
A substance that wise men besot,
A pleasure full of paine, God wot.
When I was yong, as you are now,
I spent my youth, I know not how,

Rating

The Hermites Tale.

Rating my pleaſure at ſuch a price,
More worth, then Heauens Paradice.
Theſe worldly pleaſures are but toies
Vnto the high celeſtiall ioyes,
Where God doth ſit on Syon hill
To giue the doome of good and ill,
Then if you knew how ſweete it is
To meditate on heauens bliſſe,
You ſure would leaue all worldly ſtrife
And liue with me, an Hermites life.

Anſwere.

FAther or friend, what ere you bee,
A happy man you ſeeme to mee,
The happieſt man this day on earth,
Bleſt in your age, and at your birth;
Whoſe heauenly words my heart hath wonne,
To liue with you, and be your ſonne:

Leauing

The Hermites Tale.

Leauing the world, too full of woes,
VVhere sinnes and errors daily flowes,
And take me to your homely Cell,
VVhere sweet content doth euer dwell;
Then if you please to take the paine,
For Christes sake, a soule to gaine,
Your counsell graue on me bestow,
That true religion I may know:
For all Kings Christned are at warres
For Conscience, and religious iarres;
And controuersies now haue made
One King onother to inuade,
VVith warre, with death, and famishment,
Each other still they do torment;
VVith Christians bloud they die the ground,
Piercing sweet babes with many a wound,
And aged men with siluer'd haires,
There groueling lie, in blood and teares;
VVhat sinne, what death, so-ere befall,
They make Religion cause of all.

The Hermites Tale.

A grieuous thing, when they ſhall come
To giue account for all and ſome
Before that God that knowes their thought,
If they for true Religion fought:
Or whether for ambitious pride
They meant Religion to deuide;
And ſo to kindle Gods diſpleaſure
For Kingdomes, Crownes, and worldly Treaſure;
Knowing them all to be illuſions,
To bring our ſoules into confuſions,
And make vs wiſh, ere we haue done,
Such warres had neuer beene begun.
Where Chriſtians ſeeke each others blood,
Their meaning ſeldome can be good.
But if our warres were like to them
Which were before *Ieruſalem*,
Againſt the Turkes, which there abod,
Sworne enemies vnto our God,
VVhat happy men then had we bin,
So to haue dy'd, and cleer'd our ſin?

The Hermites Tale.

VVhereas (God wot) we now do goe
To ſeate our Brothers ouerthrow.
Alas! if they in warres that die,
Did not confeſſe a Trinitie:
Or if that Heathen men they were,
VVithout all knowledge, faith or feare
Of Chriſt that dy'd to ſaue mankind
From death and hell, to him aſſign'd;
Then without any offence at all,
They might take pleaſure in our fall.

Hermite.

MY ſonne of warres you haue complain'd,
VVhich is a plague for ſinne ordain'd;
A plague that God himſelfe hath choſe,
His wrath and iuſtice to diſcloſe:
And for my part, I muſt confeſſe,
Our ſinnes (my ſonne) deſerue no leſſe.

The Hermites Tale.

Christ knowes we haue deserued more
Then euer our fathers did before:
And yet we say, they neuer knew
VVhere true Religion euer grew.
For they were still instructed then
By Friers and Monks, old ancient men,
Such as did then attribute all
Vnto Saint *Peter*, not to *Paul*.
Saying that Christ had chose alone,
Him for the Rocke, and corner stone,
And vnto him the keyes resign'd,
To open, shut, to loose and binde.
Taking the word as it was spoken,
And not the sence it did betoken:
And so by *Peters* superioritie,
The *Pope* doth chalenge his authoritie.
But come my sonne, time doth vs call.
Wee'l leaue our Christ to iudge of all.
And go with me, Il'e teach thee how to spend
The Sommer day in solace with thy friend,

The Hermites Tale.

Where thou ſhalt ſee the pleaſure of this wood,
Exceeds all other, were they nere ſo good.
Heere dwels poore men that neuer vſe to ſweare,
But yea and nay, and by the weedes they weare.
Farre be it from them to wrong his holy Name
That gaue them life, and leaue to vſe the ſame.
To him they call; and ſtill for mercy crie,
Becauſe they know in iuſtice all muſt die.
They liue ſecure, and free from any ſtrife,
And thinke *Content* to be the ſweeteſt life.
And ſo it is, to ſuch poore men as theſe, pleaſe.
That looke for nought, but how their God to
See how they labour all day till they ſweate,
And take great paines, and all to get them meate.
Sauing your Tale, good Father, what be thoſe,
That in their lookes decipher many woes,
And many times they ſeeme to make a ſhow
As though frō whence they came, they faine would
Impatient of the croſſes God hath ſent (go,
Them for their good, becauſe they ſhould repent.

The Hermites Tale.

Well ſaid (my ſonne) thy iudgement I commend,
For Man hath croſſes to none other end,
And he is happieſt that can ſuffer any
For his ſake, that for vs hath ſuffred many.
Haſt thou not heard a ſong of *Phillida*,
Of *Herpilus*, and eke *Coren*?
why theſe, my ſonne, be they.
The one is *Coren*, that once tooke
delight his Hawkes to lure,
Th'other *Herpilus*, (poore man)
that all paine did endure
For *Phillida*, and that is ſhee,
which oft did flowers twine,
And Garlands make of Violets,
to pleaſe her *Corens* mind.
But he regarded not her loue,
nor when ſhe frownd or ſmild,
It mou'd not him, he neuer car'd,
for once he was beguild.

The Hermites Tale.

And yet ſhee was the faireſt Maide
that euer nature fram'd,
And all the Shepheards would reioyce
when *Phillida* was nam'd.
But Time, the enemie to Youth,
ſent Sickeneſſe, Beauties croſſe,
As meſſenger, to tell her now
ſhee is not as ſhee was.
Her golden haire, her for-head ſmooth
her quicke full ſpeaking eie,
Her comely noſe, her lips
where loue did banquet royally,
Haue chang'd their hue, for what can laſt,
or hold that will away?
Like *Iudas* fatall Elder-tree,
ſo lookes poore *Phillida*.
Her haire with Daffadillies dight
Ewreth'd with purple-ſilke,
Is now within a night-cap tide,
vnkemb'd, as white as milke.

The Hermites Tale.

Her fore-head all with furrowes fild
that was ſo ſmoth and white,
Her eies (the Cabinets of loue)
haue loſt their wonted ſight;
Her noſe is ſharpe, her iawes are falne,
her lips that were ſo red,
Now lookes like Siluer-ore vntried,
and no teeth in her head.
Ah ſonne, if they in Court that liue
did once but thinke of this,
They ſoone would finde amongſt themſelues
how they had done amiſſe,
In pampring vp their filthy fleſh
which is a ſlaue to time,
An enemy vnto the ſoule,
a maſſe of filth and ſlime.
But come my ſon, we'le now go home
vnto our homely Caue,
And leaue poore *Phillida* to mourne
that wiſheth for her graue.

The Hermites Tale.

For *Herpilus*, and eke *Coren*,
of whom the Muſes ſong,
They vow'd to die with *Phillida*,
becauſe they lou'd ſo long.

Father, I neuer heard a Tale
to moue a man to ruth,
And make him thinke of all his ſinnes
committed in his youth
As this which you haue told;
A terror vnto thoſe
Which in their beauty, wit, or ſtrength,
do confidence repoſe.

It is no terror (ſonne) to thoſe
which meane not to repent,
They neuer thinke of crooked age,
nor of their youth miſpent;
But head-long runne from ſin to ſin,
like ſheepe that go aſtray,

The Hermites Tale.

Yet now and then for faſhion ſake
they make a ſhow to pray;
And come to Church, and knocke and kneele,
becauſe they may be taken
For honeſt, good, and godly men,
that haue the world forſaken.

'Tis true Sir, I haue heard of thoſe
that vnder ſhew of zeale;
Would hate the time, & curſe the ſtate,
and at the Clergy raile;
Ill minded men, enuious, and proud,
diſcentious, full of wroth,
Monſtrous diſſemblers, fild with ſin,
in whom there is no troth;
Theſe zealous men, meane to erect
a Church, ere it be long,
Where Papiſt neuer ſet his foote,
nor neuer Dirge was ſong;
Meane while, for feare their faction breake,

they

The Hermites Tale.

they thinke it beſt behoues them,
To meete in Barnes, and there to Preach;
euen as the Spirit moues them,
And there they pray, before they Preach,
in heart, with one accord,
That they may neuer laugh, for feare
they do offend the Lord;
Then ſtarteth vp a brother ſtraight
vpon a wicker Chayre,
And talkes of ſinne, and how it raignes
amongſt vs euery where;
How euery ſtate is diſcontent,
How many ſinne, how few repent:
What May-poles, and what Whitſon-ales,
What ringing, and what old-wiues tales,
Are now beleeu'd to be the way
To ſaue vs all another day.

My ſon, theſe men will nere endure the touch,
They know too little, and they ſpeake too much,

The Hermites Tale.

Their lookes are ſmoth, like Siluer purifide,
They will proue Copper, when they ſhall be tri'd.
I neuer heard of theſe which ſeeme ſo pure,
Which for Chriſts ſake wold Martirdom endure,
And yet no doubt, as long as peace remaines,
Their conſcience will endure any paines.
But if the God of warre abroad ſhould range,
And catch theſe men that long to ſee a change,
You then ſhould ſee them all within one day,
For very feare of death, to turne Turke-way.
But come my ſonne, ſit downe and let vs eate
Theſe homely cates, in ſteed of better meate,
And leaue theſe men that enuy ſo the ſtate,
To die like dogs, that can do nought but prate.

I'le tell you, Father, of a Tale
that is in *Skeltons* rime,
A fooliſh Tale, but yet a Tale
to driue away the time;
Of a very pleaſant lad

The Hermites Tale.

my Tale I muſt beginne,
That came into a houſe, by chaunce,
where Sectaries did Inne,
And being in their company,
not knowing what they were,
He was as merry as a Pie,
ſtill skypping here and there,
Till at the laſt a ciuill Sire
came mildly towards him,
And like a man of God, rebuk'd
this yong-man for his ſinne.
This merry Lad, mus'd at the man,
as one loath to offend,
Saying, if he had done amiſſe,
he would be glad to mend.
Night drew on, Supper came in,
they all with one conſent
Deſir'd this yong-mans company,
and he was well content.
He ſadly ſate all Supper while,

The Hermites Tale.

and not a word he ſaid:
And as they did, ſo would he do.
They after ſupper prayed,
And Chapters read, and ſung a Pſalme
all to inſtruct the youth,
What great delight he ought to haue
in reading of the truth.
VVhen that the Lord was ſerued thus,
they cald a reckning preſently,
And would not let this yong man pay,
but thank'd him for his company.
This pleaſant Lad muz'd at the men,
yet being farre from ſcorning,
Intreated them to breake their faſt
with him the next day morning.
They thank'd him all with one conſent,
but eſpecially Maiſter *Powes*,
Deſired him to beſtow no coſt,
but onely Beefe and Browes.
You ſhall haue nothing eſe (quoth he)

welcome

The Hermites Tale.

welcome ſhall be your chiefe,
And ſo good-night, vntill we meete
all at a peece of biefe,
The morning came, & there they met,
the boy that knew his time,
Set them downe to breakefaſt ſtraight,
and then began his rime.
You are welcome heartily, vnto luſty *Humphrey*,
VVelcome here muſt be your chiefe
To a friendly peece of Biefe,
Such as was vs'd in ancient time
VVhen houſe-keeping was in prime;
VVhen the Biefe and Brewes flouriſht,
VVhen the ſilly ſoules were nouriſht,
Then 'twas a wonder to the poore
To ſee a Porter keepe the doore,
Then were ſilly harmeleſſe folkes,
Plaine chimneyes then were full of ſmoakes:
Euery table then was ſpred,
And furniſht out with Biefe and bread,

Euery

The Hermites Tale.

Euery man then tooke a pleaſure
In his houſe to ſpend his treaſure.
Who was then the Gentries Gueſt?
The Widdow poore, that's oft oppreſt,
The Souldiers with their wounds and skarres
Bleeding for their Countries warres.
Then in the Country dwelt true pitty,
Now Chriſtmas is but for the Citty;
A Gentleman of ſmall reuenew,
Had then the poore for his retinew.
Waſt not then a merry time
When thy neighbour came to mine,
Canſt thou lend me twenty pound
For to buy a peece of ground?
Without ſtatute, or a bond
Their word as good as any hand.
Then men of ancient calling
Loued no pride for feare of falling,
Country Ruſſet was their wearing,
And Kendall greene, for feare of tearing.

The Hermites Tale.

The Clothier ſcarce the Mercer knew,
Now Silke-wormes make the Sheepe to rue,
The Plough-man liu'd, ſweete was his paine,
The Taylor now ſweepes vp his gaine.
If any now do take compaſſion,
Tis to checke the oldeſt faſhion;
Yet paying for new faſhions gold,
In ſpight of all, the new is old.
But what meane I to runne ſo farre?
My fooliſh words may breed a skarre,
Let vs talke of *Robin Hoode*,
And little *Iohn* in merry Shirewood,
Of Poet *Skelton* with his pen,
And many other merry men,
Of May-game Lords, and Sommer Queenes,
With Milke-maides, dancing o're the Greenes,
Of merry *Tarlton* in our time,
Whoſe conceite was very fine,
Whom Death hath wounded with his Dart,
That lou'd a May-pole with his heart.

The Hermites Tale.

His humour was to pleaſe all them
That ſeeme no Gods, but mortall men,
For (ſaith he) in theſe our daies,
The Cobler now his Laſt downe laies,
And if he can but reade, (God wot)
Hee talkes and prates he knowes not what,
Of May-poles, and of merriments
That haue no ſpot of ill pretence.
But I wonder now and then,
To ſee the wiſe and learned men,
VVith countenance grim, and many a frowne
Cries, Maiſters, plucke the May-pole downe.
To heare this newes, the Milke-maide cries,
To ſee the ſight, the Plough-man dies.
'Tis a ieſt to ſee when they beginne
For to plucke downe ſuch wodden ſinne.
Fooliſh men, and faith-leſſe too,
That ſtill profeſſe, and nothing do.
The Sectaries were in a rage,
and knew not what to ſay,

They

The Hermites Tale.

They ſpit, and chafd, and ſtampt amaine,
and would haue gone away.
This merry Lad began to laugh,
and to them thus replide,
You ſee it ſtands not with my youth
from pleaſure to be tide,
I loue to ſit and laugh,
not to offend the wiſe,
I care not for their company
that honeſt mirth deſpiſe:
Thoſe that be Saints abroad,
whoſe ſubſtance ſhadowes bee,
Let them go ſeeke Preciſian-ſects,
they are no mates for mee.
And when you are at home,
thinke of this prouerbe told,
The Tree is ſtill knowne by his fruite,
if it be nere ſo old.
The poore men went away,
all diſcontent in minde,

The Hermites Tale.

And had no pleaſure to their meate,
bnt left it all behind.
Now, Father, be you iudge
who plaid the better part,
They with their zeale, or elſe the boy
that ſpoke with all his heart.

In ſadneſſe my good ſonne,
I neuer yet did heare,
A Tale to that effect,
ſo much to pleaſe mine eare;
My iudgement I will ſtay,
vntill our better leiſure,
I'le ſhow thee heere a booke my ſonne,
wherein thou maiſt take pleaſure:
Heere ſhalt thou reade my ſonne
a volume of diſpaire,
The death of many a conquering king,
their liues, and what they were,
The wiſedome of this world,

The Hermites Tale.

the frailty of our age,
Our preſent time now acting ſinne
like Players on a ſtage.
I writ it with this hand
that once could guide a pen,
And ſet my Launce into my reſt
as well as other men.
But (oh) thoſe daies are paſt,
and now I wiſh to haue
For all my ſeruice done,
a white ſheete and a graue.
My Caske of ſteele is to a night-cap turn'd,
My ſhining Armour to a gowne of gray,
My youthful heart, which once with beauty burn'd
Like dreames illuſions, vading paſſe away,
Euen as the night doth from the glorious day.
My Naples Courſer is a banke of earth,
Whereon I ſit to manage all my ſinnes,
Twixt life and death, which are borne mortall twinnes.
My bridle now muſt be my Beades,

The Hermites Tale.

The golden boſſes bookes,
And all my Sonnets muſt be prayers
VVhereon deuotion lookes,
My Launce turn'd to a Palmers ſtaffe
VVhich once was painted braue,
And all my followers be my ſinnes,
To bring me to my graue.
The ſhield which now my Page
Vnto my Prince muſt giue,
Is (time miſpent) *An aged man.*
that can no longer liue.
Beleeue me ſonne, I would not liue
For to be yong againe,
To be great Emperor of the world
The world I ſo diſdaine.
Iudge you if I ſay true,
Reade this, and know my mind,
They that haue eyes, may ſee the world,
Or elſe they are borne blind:
It is a world of care,

The Hermites Tale.

The greateſt Prince that raignes
Hath not halfe pleaſure in his Crowne
To equall all his paines.
And he that liues in Court,
And can but fauour win,
VVhat ere he was, he may be ſure
That all will follow him.
The ſurly Vſhers then
VVill do him any grace,
That told him but a weeke before
He did not know his place;
His fellowes of the Guard,
VVhen he comes to the dore,
VVill all ſtand vp and make a legge,
That would ſit downe before.
But if this man be proud,
And full of high diſdaine,
Caring for nothing elſe at all
But for his priuate gaine.
Then Enuy mou'd in heart,

The Hermites Tale.

A Iury ſtraight doth call,
Inditing that vſurping man
Conſpiring his downe-fall.
And ſtraight he doth informe
The Iury what he was,
That now vſurpes, and hates the poore
And doth his betters croſſe.
The Poet hearing this,
Puls forth a booke of Tables,
And makes a ſubtill rime,
Much like to *Eſops* fables;
Then being fore-man, tels a Tale
That was not much regarded,
How men of vertue and of worth,
Did wander vnrewarded:
So he that liues in Court,
And doth not ſeeke to haue
The loue of euery priuate man,
And of the pooreſt ſlaue,
Let him be ſure of this,

The Hermites Tale.

If Fortune chance to frowne,
Enuy in time will turne the wheele
And throw him head-long downe.
Who would bee such a man
When Time his fortune reades,
That he must leaue his Offices,
And take him to his beades,
And in a shirt of hayre,
Repent his time misled,
And giue his treasure to the poore,
Whom hee hath iniured.
This were the way to go
In peace vnto his graue,
For none without they do repent,
Can any mercy haue.
But liues there such a man?
No sure there can be none,
We all are Lambes, no Foxes now,
The deuil's dead and gone,
No sure: if he were dead,

The Hermites Tale.

The Poets then would leaue
To write of thoſe that follow him,
And all the world deceiue.
But fare-well to the world
Vnleſſe I come by ſtealth,
It neuer cares to grace ſuch men
As want both wit and wealth.
I cannot kiſſe my hand
Nor lout below the knee,
Nor take a feather from your gowne,
You know ſuch men there be.
In world one vndermines
another to no end,
And worſt they ſpeed,
who moſt in hope do ſpend,
Enuide they are,
on whom but Fortune ſmiles,
Though thoſe ſmiles turne
to nothing other-whiles.
The mighty, ſeeking

The Hermites Tale.

to enlarge their might,
Into contempt oft tumble
downe out-right.
The Lawyers Clyent
crouching on his knees,
Preuaileth nought,
except he bring large fees.
The Cittizen, the Scholler,
and the Boore,
Without a largesse,
are thrust out of doore.
Brauery, the gallant nouice
thinkes doth all,
When it consum'd,
his credite is but small.
Valour and Wit,
proud on their tip-toes stand,
And thinke chiefe dignities
they may command.
When that a foole,

The Hermites Tale.

a Paraſite, a Pander,
Betwixt them ſteps,
and they are ſet to wander.
So from the head
vnto the foote it fares,
Each one ſupplanteth
other vnawares.
The wiſeſt builders,
againſt after ſtormes,
Fiſhing for honour,
baite their hookes with wormes;
Wormes that do dig
and delue for them all day,
Yet to all rauenous birds
are left a pray.
In Common-wealth
how many vainely dreame
Of Indian Mines,
that fiſh againſt the ſtreame?
How many, that but hauing

The Hermites Tale.

one good bite,
A nodde, or leaſt glaunce
from their Miſtres ſight,
Coſt vpon coſt, clap thicke
and three-fold on,
And neuer ceaſe,
till they be quite vndone.
How many that do fiſh before the Net,
VVho offices before they fall do get,
And count all fiſh into their Net doth chaunce,
VVhom nought ſo vile, but ſerueth to aduance.
All theſe purſuing gaine, not true content,
Fiſh for their bane, their toile is fruitleſſe ſpent.
This is the world my ſonne,
Then now ſome comfort giue
To me poore man, my time is come
I can no longer liue
Mine age, my bleſſed age,
VVherein I do reioyce,
Hath lent me time for to repent,

The Hermites Tale.

And ſing with Angels voyce,
Hymnes, Anthems, Laude, and Praiſe
Vnto the King of Kings,
Which out of this vilde wretched world
Poore ſoules to heauen brings.

You Poets all and ſome
That write of *Eſops* fables,
Conceiting plots to pleaſe the world
Notes from your booke of Tables;
Me thinkes that *A-iax* ſhould you call,
To make waſt-paper of you all
That ſpend your time to pleaſe the time,
With fictions, tales, and idle rime,
Leauing the marke that ſhould be hit,
To praiſe Gods glory, and your wit.
Oxford and *Cambridge* was erected
For Vertue, not for vice protected.
Ah, ſonne, I faint, mine age and I
Are ſtriuing now who firſt ſhould die:

The Hermites Tale.

My will is made, I haue no wealth,
But wiſhes, prayers, content and health,
To thee my ſonne, and all my friends
That credite to this vaine world lends.
My ſwolne-ſicke heart, with death is toſt,
Like to a foote-ball in a froſt;
God bleſſe thee ſonne, now cloſe mine eyes,
I hope my ſoule to heauen flies.
And thus I end my Hermites Tale
Which is of mickle ruth,
It proues there is no hope in age,
Nor certainty in youth.

As for this homely Tale,
And hee that made the ſame,
Hath neither learning, wealth, nor wit,
And ſcarce can write his name.

FINIS.